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## WHOM WILL THE DEMOCRATS NEXT NOMINATE FOR PRESIDENT?

BY A JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRAT.

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It is high time that thoughtful Democrats should begin to consider the question, on what issue they mean to appeal to the American people in 1908, and what standard-bearer is most likely to lead their hosts to victory. A new Federal House of Representatives will be chosen in November of this year; so will many Governors; so will many State Legislatures, which, in their turn, may powerfully affect the composition of the Federal Senate. The rank and file of the Democracy will be immensely encouraged in their effort to pluck success from the coming contest at the ballot-box, if they know that their leaders, far from maintaining an expectant attitude, and allowing things to drift, have agreed upon a sound and attractive policy, and are prepared to name a candidate for the Presidency who shall be "available" in the true sense of the word, through his power to inspire confidence, to command respect, and to secure the zealous support of the Independents, who in 1884 and in 1892 proved themselves able to turn the scale.

### I.

So far as the framing of an issue is concerned, it should

prove a much easier task for Democrats than for Republicans. As regards the two great questions of tariff revision and the regulation of interstate railways and other great corporations engaged in interstate commerce, the Republican party seems to be irreparably ruptured. Only with the help of Democratic Senators, if at all, will Mr. Roosevelt be able to place a rate-making bill embodying his personal views upon the statute-book. It follows that Government control of consolidated capital cannot be made a pivotal issue at the next Presidential election. It is true that the Democrats may justly claim to have upheld from the outset the popular demand for Federal supervision of huge railway combinations and of all formidable trusts; but the Republicans may as justly say that the same demand was recognized and pressed by their Executive chief in the White House, by many of their Senators and by all but seven of their Representatives. It would, therefore, be difficult, if not impracticable, to make the election of 1906, or that of 1908, turn on the Trust issue. It is otherwise with the question of tariff revision. The Protectionist Republicans, or Stand-Patters, have shown themselves absolute masters of their party, in both the Senate and the House of Representatives; for, if they permitted the House to pass the Philippine tariff bill, it was with the foreknowledge that the measure was going to its grave in a Senatorial committee. President Roosevelt, who, some time ago, was an advocate of tariff revision, seems to have bowed to the inevitable, and, of late, has evinced no inclination to urge reductions of the Dingley Tariff. On the other hand, the Republican friends of revision in the Fifty-ninth Congress, though relatively few, are resolute and impassioned, and have betrayed more than once a willingness to organize a revolt against the dominant element of their party, and their spirit of insubordination is strengthened by the knowledge that, in many sections of the country, the movement for revision is gaining great momentum even among Republican voters. We doubt if it would be possible to find a single Independent—by which, of course, we mean a man who in theory and practice is non-partisan—who is not also an avowed and earnest revisionist. Under the circumstances, the Democrats are not so much called upon to make tariff revision the axial issue of the contests in 1906 and 1908, as they are to accept frankly and eagerly an axial issue already made for them. That they will hail such an issue with

enthusiasm is obvious. A party which in the past has demanded a tariff for revenue could not fail to welcome revision as at least a step in the right direction.

We see, then, that tariff revision, which events have made the main plank in the Democratic platform, will strongly commend Democratic candidates, provided these are wisely selected, not only to the great scale-turning body of Independents, but also to that large and growing minority of Republicans whose party allegiance is slack compared with the firmness of their demand for certain reductions of the Dingley tariff. Under the circumstances, Democrats should be able to repeat in Massachusetts the triumph gained by Governor William L. Douglas two years ago. In New York, where the Republican party is rent by faction, the Democrats certainly should be able to do much better next November than they did in 1902, when they cut down Governor Odell's plurality to less than nine thousand votes. They ought not to miss victory in Pennsylvania, where their nominee for State Treasurer was elected less than five months ago. Bright also is their prospect of carrying Ohio, where their candidate for Governor was successful at the latest election. They will surely recover Missouri, which only for transient reasons gave her electoral votes to Mr. Roosevelt in 1904. They have a right to expect considerable gains in Maine, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Iowa, where there are many tariff-revisionists in the Republican ranks. On the whole, the Democracy seems pretty well assured of preponderance in the next House of Representatives.

## II.

Having thus proved successful in the preliminary skirmish, what step should next be taken by the national Democracy in order to win the great battle for the Presidency? It will not avail them to have the right platform: they must have the right candidate as well. They had the right platform in 1880, and, if, with or without his consent, they had nominated Samuel J. Tilden, feeble and moribund as he was, they would have proved as irresistible as were the Christian cavaliers of Spain when they charged with the dead Cid at their head clad in his armor and propped upon his war-horse. That they had the right platform in that year is evident from the fact that President Arthur soon after recognized the necessity of revision, and brought about the

creation of a Commission for the purpose. In 1884, the Democrats did not win by virtue of their platform, which was an evasive one, but because a large fraction of the Republicans in pivotal States bolted from Mr. Blaine and voted for Mr. Cleveland. In 1888, Mr. Cleveland stood on the right platform, but the non-partisans were inactive. Four years later, the Independents rallied; and, as there was simultaneously a good deal of discord among Republican leaders, caused by Mr. Harrison's frigid treatment of many of them, Mr. Cleveland's victory was monumental. It is our judgment that in 1904, after Judge Parker's electrifying telegram to the St. Louis Convention had blazoned in deathless colors his fidelity to the gold standard, the Democratic candidate could not have been beaten by any man except Mr. Roosevelt, who, although not, by principle and by practice, a Jeffersonian Democrat, as Senator Tillman justly says, had at that time proclaimed his approval of two Democratic demands, that, namely, for the Federal supervision of interstate railways, and of interstate commerce generally, together with that for tariff revision. Having stolen the Democratic thunder by his advocacy of Federal supervision of interstate railways, and of interstate commerce, Mr. Roosevelt remained the cloud-compelling Zeus, and kept his place upon the summit of Olympus. It is, in other words, our opinion that the contest of 1904 did not turn upon platforms at all, but solely upon the vote-getting qualifications of the candidates, and, naturally, as Chief-Judge Parker was comparatively little known, and may possibly have lacked Mr. Roosevelt's magnetic personality, he had to succumb.

To which of the great sections of the Republic should the Democrats now turn for a candidate? Nebraska and some other Western States declare that we ought to put forward William J. Bryan for a third time. We have never questioned the ability or the patriotism of the eminent Nebraskan. We believe that, if elevated to the White House, and loaded with a sense of tremendous responsibilities, he would evince sobriety and caution, sagacity and foresight. Neither have we ever seen cause to doubt his loyalty to Chief-Judge Parker, the nominee of Mr. Bryan's party in the last Presidential campaign. Traitors there unquestionably were among pretended Democrats; but William J. Bryan was not one of them. Can he, however, blame his brethren when they confess a superstitious fear that he was born under an unlucky star? Never

in the history of this country has an American citizen been elected Chief Magistrate who twice previously had been a candidate for that great office, and twice had been defeated. Only thrice in our annals has a man who had even been *once* defeated been re-nominated and elected. We refer, of course, to Jefferson, to Jackson, and to Cleveland. The only other man whom Western Democrats would be at all likely to propose is Governor Folk of Missouri. He is relatively a young man, little more than eligible, in respect of age, for the Presidency, if we judge by precedents as well as by the letter of the Constitution. His career, which promises great distinction, has but begun. He, if any man, can afford to wait. As for the States east of the Mississippi and north of the Potomac, they present at the hour when we write no man whom the national Democracy would be at all likely to nominate. It is improbable that Mr. Hearst would even come forward as a candidate before the next Democratic National Convention, unless he should have been successful in obtaining the Governorship of New York. Mr. George B. McClellan has solemnly declared that he will accept a nomination for no other office, so long as he is Mayor of New York City. It is possible that a Democrat may be chosen this year Governor of Pennsylvania, but there is reason to fear that this State would still prove insuperably Republican in a Presidential year. We may add that no Pennsylvania Democrat can be said to have a national reputation. We should next point out that the day is distant when either the Democrats or the Republicans will take a nominee for the Presidency from the States west of the Rocky Mountains. That section has yet much to gain in respect of population before it can pretend to such an honor.

There remains the section south of the Potomac and the Ohio, which is composed of former slaveholding States. The Democratic leaders of that section have hitherto deemed it inexpedient to press upon Democratic National Conventions the nomination of a Southern man. There is nothing new about this belief in a Southerner's unavailability. It prevailed for many years before the Civil War. James K. Polk was the last Southerner nominated by a Democratic National Convention for the Presidency. The Whigs, for reasons that we cannot pause to enumerate here, did not concur in the opinion that a Southern man was unavailable. They twice nominated Henry Clay, a representative

of Kentucky; and, on one of the only two occasions when they were successful, they nominated Zachary Taylor of Louisiana. Is it any longer true that the nomination of a son of the South is inexpedient? Is it not a fact that all Northern Democrats, all Independents, and many large-minded Republicans, are convinced that the time has come to make a Southern man Chief Magistrate? Must we not acknowledge that the South, although nominally restored to the full privileges of States in the Union when she was permitted to send Senators and Representatives to Congress, is still partially disfranchised so long as her sons are debarred from the highest honor in the gift of the Republic? Shall we ever witness a veritable union—not of force and law, but of hearts—until, with the cordial concurrence of a large part of the North, a Southern man becomes Chief Magistrate? When a Southern man takes possession of the White House, then indeed will the white flowers of concord and mutual affection bloom above our battle-fields, and the last drop of bitterness be purged from the sad memories of fraternal warfare. Then, indeed, will peace smile upon the land, and equity lift its head triumphant. We profess in the North to have forgiven the South, but not yet can we claim to have brought forth fruits meet for forgiveness. They profess in the South—and they proved in 1898 that the profession was sincere—to have accepted accomplished facts, and to have acquiesced loyally in a Union which they failed to subvert. Their recognition deserves acknowledgment, and their loyalty reward. That reward can only take one adequate, one convincing, one decisive form—the elevation of a Southern man to the Presidency of the United States.

### III.

No observant and fair-minded Northerner will deny the existence of an abundance of Presidential timber in the South. For fashioning the ribs of the Ship of State, Georgia pine is as well fitted as the cedar of Maine. It is not true that the States, once Confederate, have lost the breed of statesmen that once dominated the Commonwealth. We could name many a Democratic Senator to-day, and more than one Democratic Representative, who, in respect of political experience, political insight and political prescience, measures fully up to the standard of Chief Magistrate. There are Senator Morgan of Alabama, and

Senator Pettus of the same State, and, if some persons perchance should deem them disqualified by age, there are Senator Daniel of Virginia, and Senator Bailey of Texas, than whom no men in the Senate are more respected on the score of knowledge, judgment and the power of lucid, forceful exposition. May it not, however, be true that these distinguished Southern legislators, by the very reason of their prolonged prominence in public life, and of their strenuous and gallant upholding of the interests of their section, are ill calculated to allay lingering prejudices that ought to be extinct, and to quench the last flickering embers of sectional animosities, which it is a shame to keep alive?

We must remember that the question of nominating a Southern man for the Presidency is complicated with the imperative necessity that the first *post-bellum* Southern Administration shall be memorably successful. If the first Southern Administration should prove a failure, or only a half-success, it is much to be feared that there would never be another, so vast and so rapidly increasing is the numerical preponderance of the North. To insure such success, it is indispensable that the temper of the Republicans, if beaten in 1908, shall be resigned and acquiescent, not angry, vindictive and defiant. In other words, if a Southern President is to leave behind him a bright record of constructive statesmanship and useful legislation, he must have the good will, if not the active support, of the whole country, and such good will is only to be gained from a conviction, deep implanted at the North, as well as at the South, that both sections can count upon his sympathy, and, above all, upon that intimate acquaintance without which sympathy is fruitless.

We probably will be permitted to assert without contradiction that such all-embracing sympathy, such intimate and comprehensive acquaintance with the views, wishes and interests of all sections of the Republic is not possessed at the present juncture by any eminent Southern statesman. No veteran Southern statesman would claim it, we think, though we are sure that more than one of them sincerely regrets the lack of it. Is it necessary, however, that the Democracy, in its search for a worthy and a promising candidate for the Presidency, should confine itself to men who have spent the best part of their lives in the political arena? In this country political parties that have coveted success have not always circumscribed thus narrowly their field of selection. It

was not, of course, his brief and almost speechless legislative experience in the Virginia Assembly, but his priceless military services, culminating in the capture of Cornwallis, which caused Washington in 1788 to receive every electoral vote for the Presidency. It was not his civil record in Tennessee, but the victory of New Orleans, that carried Andrew Jackson to the White House in 1828. It was not the fact that he had been Governor of Indiana Territory, and a member of both Houses of Congress, but the fact that he had triumphed at Tippecanoe, and, in the War of 1812, had beaten British soldiers under Proctor, and totally routed them in the Battle of the Thames, that caused the country to go "hell-bent" for William Henry Harrison in 1840. It was the battles of Palo Alto, of Resaca de la Palma and of Buena Vista that made Zachary Taylor Chief Magistrate, although he was asserted and believed never to have voted in his life. Not a few well-informed persons are convinced that, had the Republicans in 1868 put forward a typical representative of the Thaddeus Stevens faction, and had the Democratic National Convention nominated, as it was on the verge of doing, Chief-Justice Chase, the latter, sure as he was of Horace Greeley's zealous support, would have had a fair chance of securing a majority of the Presidential electors. If the Republicans were overwhelmingly successful that year at the ballot-box, it was because their choice fell on the man who hailed from Appomattox, though he had not voted for years, and though his latest vote is alleged to have been cast for a Democratic ticket.

Nor have party managers in the United States always confined themselves to the army, when, turning away for the moment from professional politicians, they have discussed or agreed upon the selection of a candidate from some other field of public usefulness. We can see in retrospect that, if the Republican National Convention in 1856 had followed the advice of Thaddeus Stevens, not yet discredited by headlong partisanship, and had nominated Justice McLean of the United States Supreme Court, they would probably have carried Pennsylvania, and, in all likelihood, have gained a majority of the electoral votes. In 1904, the Democracy conferred a nomination for the Presidency on the Chief Justice of the New York Court of Appeals, and, as has been already intimated, there is but little doubt that, after his memorable telegram to the St. Louis Convention, Chief-Judge Parker would

have been elected had he not been pitted against a popular idol. He would have beaten with the utmost ease a Republican competitor of the Hanna type.

#### IV.

Is it only in the legislative arena, in the army or in the judiciary that great political parties must seek a name to conjure with in contests for the Presidency? Is it true that, as things are now, the intellect of the nation flows solely or mainly through those channels? Has not industry its generals, its commanders-in-chief, its conquerors? If brains were the only prerequisite, would not the creator of a transcontinental railroad, the impartor of prodigious development to the nation's natural resources, the successful consummator of such an enterprise as the Panama Canal, deserve the suffrages of his fellow citizens for the highest post at their disposal? There was a time when a large part of the American people would have answered the question in the affirmative, for in 1812 they gave no fewer than eighty-nine electoral votes to De Witt Clinton, who was already advocating the great undertaking which he was ultimately to accomplish, the construction of the Erie Canal. It is possibly true, however, that, in our day, owing to the inimical relations of labor and capital, a victor in the field of industrial evolution, however qualified he might be on the score of intellectual worth and of services to the country, would be unavailable as a candidate, if considered from the view-point of his vote-getting ability. For the moment, therefore, the triumphant organizers of production and transportation, who, by sheer dint of mental energy, have amassed colossal fortunes, may be eliminated from the list of available nominees.

There remains a field of activity and usefulness the importance of which to the nation cannot be overestimated; nor will any fair-minded man dispute that the eminent and fruitful workers in that field may challenge the highest office in the gift of the American people on the score of merit and of availability. We refer, of course, to the victors in the vast and inestimable department of public instruction; to the great captains of the higher education. The designation of such men for distinguished functions under the Federal Government is by no means unprecedented. George Bancroft had been a college tutor and a schoolmaster, and he left incomplete his famous "*History of the United States*," to become Secretary of the Navy in the Polk Administration, and, subsequently, he

was sent to represent his country in London and in Berlin. Edward Everett, after the death of Daniel Webster, left the Presidency of Harvard College to become Secretary of State. Mr. Andrew D. White, the former President of Cornell University, has more than once been invited to occupy the highest posts in the nation's diplomatic service. No one has ever disputed that the statesmanlike duties assumed by these organizers, directors and inspirers of the higher education were admirably discharged. Why, then, should not the Democratic party in 1908, when seeking a nominee for the Presidency who will not only deserve but command success, turn its eyes in the same promising direction? Is it not quite possible to find among the Presidents of honored universities a man richly qualified for the headship of the Federal Government by great natural ability, by long and distinguished professional experience, by the illuminating and invigorating trend of his studies, by his exceptional popularity and by his unique power of securing the confidence, the sympathy and the support of all sections of the Union?

## V.

We submit that such a man may be found in Woodrow Wilson of Virginia, now President of Princeton University. Woodrow Wilson, we may briefly recall, was born at Stanton, Virginia, on December 28, 1856, and is not yet, therefore, fifty years of age. He was graduated from Princeton in 1879, and, after studying law in the University of Virginia, he began the practice of his profession in Atlanta, Georgia. The lady whom he married in 1885 was a native of Savannah. Impelled by his personal tastes and aptitudes to transfer his energies from the law to the field of the higher education, he became successively a Professor of History and Political Economy in Bryn Mawr College and Wesleyan University, then a Professor of Jurisprudence and Politics at Princeton; and, finally, since August, 1902, he has been the President of the last-named University. He is held in the highest honor by every Princeton graduate and by all university men. He is known to a multitude of thoughtful readers as the author of "Congressional Government: a Study of American Politics"; of "The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics"; of "Division and Reunion, 1829-1889"; of a life of "George Washington"; and, finally, of an elaborate and comprehensive "History of the American People." As was pointed out the

other day in "Harper's Weekly," no one who reads understandingly his record of his country's extraordinary growth, which in his "History of the American People" seemed to flow with such apparent ease from his pen, can fail to be impressed with the belief that he is, by instinct and education, a statesman. The grasp of fundamental principles, the seemingly intuitive application of primary truths to changing conditions, the breadth of thought and the cogency of reasoning exemplified in the pages of that work, were rightly acclaimed in "Harper's Weekly" as clear evidences of sagacity, worthy of Virginia's noblest traditions, as was also the eloquent appeal addressed last year by President Wilson to his brethren of the South, in which he called upon them to rise manfully from the ashes of prejudice and lethargy, and come back into their own. We ourselves cordially concur—and we believe that far-sighted Democrats all over the country will concur also—with "Harper's Weekly" in the conviction that the country needs relief from the strenuous and histrionic methods of Federal administration now exemplified in the White House. It needs a man who is a genuine historical scholar, and who has conclusively proved himself a competent executive. It needs a statesman of breadth, depth and exceptional sagacity; an idealist, who, at the same time, shall be exceptionally sane. It needs a man who, although steeped in Jeffersonian teachings, can be trusted at a given crisis to ask, not what Jefferson *did* a century ago, but what Jefferson would do *now*. It needs a man whose nomination would be a recognition of the South, which the South nobly deserves, and whose election would be a decisive proof of the full restoration of the Union. Such, unquestionably, is the man whom the country urgently requires, by whatever political party he may chance to be brought forward. Such a man is Woodrow Wilson of Virginia and New Jersey. We add that he is a Democrat, and of course a tariff-revisionist. In a word he meets all the exigencies of the situation.

A JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRAT.